United Nations A/54/561

General Assembly

Distr.: General
12 November 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 74

Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

Report of the First Committee

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I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 53/75 of 4 December 1998.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 17 September 1999, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 23 September 1999, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 64, 65 and 67 to 85, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 11 to 15 and from 18 to 20 October (see A/C.1/54/PV.3-12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 13th to 19th meetings, on 21 and 22 and from 25 to 29 October (see A/C.1/54/PV.13-19). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 20th to 27th meetings, on 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9 November (see A/C.1/54/PV.20-27).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Conference on Disarmament;[1]

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/54/27).

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(b) Letter dated 5 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (A/54/205-S/1999/853);

(c) Letter dated 15 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New York on 23 September 1999 (A/54/469-S/1999/1063).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36

5. At the 19th meeting, on 29 October, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/54/L.36). Subsequently, Bangladesh, Cuba, Fiji, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, and the Sudan joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 20th meeting, on 1 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36 by a recorded vote of 77 to none, with 50 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows:[2]

In favour:

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

[2] The delegations of Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone subsequently indicated that they had intended to vote in favour.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the need to allay the legitimate concern of the States of the world with regard to ensuring lasting security for their peoples,

Convinced that nuclear weapons pose the greatest threat to mankind and to the survival of civilization,

Welcoming the progress achieved in recent years in both nuclear and conventional disarmament,

Noting that, despite recent progress in the field of nuclear disarmament, further efforts are necessary towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control,

Convinced that nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons are essential to remove the danger of nuclear war,

Determined strictly to abide by the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations on the non-use of force or threat of force,

Recognizing that the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of non-nuclear-weapon States need to be safeguarded against the use or threat of use of force, including the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

Considering that, until nuclear disarmament is achieved on a universal basis, it is imperative for the international community to develop effective measures and arrangements to ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons from any quarter,

Recognizing that effective measures and arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons can contribute positively to the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons,

Bearing in mind paragraph 59 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[3] the first special session devoted to disarmament, in which it urged the nuclear-weapon States to pursue efforts to conclude, as appropriate, effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and desirous of promoting the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Final Document,

[3] Resolution S-10/2

Recalling the relevant parts of the special report of the Committee on Disarmament[4] submitted to the General Assembly at its twelfth special session,[5] the second special session devoted to disarmament, and of the special report of the Conference on Disarmament submitted to the Assembly at its fifteenth special session,[6] the third special session devoted to disarmament, as well as the report of the Conference on its 1992 session,[7]

Recalling also paragraph 12 of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade, contained in the annex to its resolution 35/46 of 3 December 1980, which states, *inter alia*, that all efforts should be exerted by the Committee on Disarmament urgently to negotiate with a view to reaching agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons,

Noting the in-depth negotiations undertaken in the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear-Weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons,[8] with a view to reaching agreement on this question,

Taking note of the proposals submitted under the item in the Conference on Disarmament, including the drafts of an international convention,

Taking note also of the relevant decision of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998,[9] as well as the relevant recommendations of the Organization of the Islamic Conference,

Taking note further of the unilateral declarations made by all the nuclear-weapon States on their policies of non-use or non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States,

Noting the support expressed in the Conference on Disarmament and in the General Assembly for the elaboration of an international convention to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as the difficulties pointed out in evolving a common approach acceptable to all,

Taking note of Security Council resolution 984 (1995) of 11 April 1995 and the views expressed on it,

Recalling its relevant resolutions adopted in previous years, in particular resolutions 45/54 of 4 December 1990, 46/32 of 6 December 1991, 47/50 of 9 December 1992, 48/73 of 16 December 1993, 49/73 of 15 December 1994, 50/68 of 12 December 1995, 51/43 of 10 December 1996, 52/36 of 9 December 1997 and 53/75 of 4 December 1998,

1. *Reaffirms* the urgent need to reach an early agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

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[4] The Committee on Disarmament was redesignated the Conference on Disarmament as from 7 February 1984.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Special Session, Supplement No. 2* (A/S-12/2), sect. III.C.

[6] Ibid., *Fifteenth Special Session, Supplement No. 2* (A/S-15/2), sect. III.F.

[7] Ibid., *Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/47/27), sect. III.F.

[8] Ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/48/27), para. 39.

[9] See A/53/667-S/1998/1071, annex I; see *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifty-third Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1998*, document S/1998/1071.

2. *Notes with satisfaction* that in the Conference on Disarmament there is no objection, in principle, to the idea of an international convention to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, although the difficulties with regard to evolving a common approach acceptable to all have also been pointed out;

3. *Appeals* to all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to work actively towards an early agreement on a common approach and, in particular, on a common formula that could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character;

4. *Recommends* that further intensive efforts be devoted to the search for such a common approach or common formula and that the various alternative approaches, including, in particular, those considered in the Conference on Disarmament, be further explored in order to overcome the difficulties;

5. *Recommends also* that the Conference on Disarmament actively continue intensive negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement and concluding effective international arrangements to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, taking into account the widespread support for the conclusion of an international convention and giving consideration to any other proposals designed to secure the same objective;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".